

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original): An apparatus comprising:

a transabdominal tube having a proximal end portion adapted to be inserted into the upper digestive system of a patient and a distal end portion adapted to extend externally from the patient; and

a pump attachable to the tube for removing partially digested food from the upper digestive system of the patient.

Claim 2 (original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the pump is attachable to the distal end portion of the tube.

Claim 3 (original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the pump is removable from the tube and comprises at least one of a cylindrical pump, a bulb pump, and a syringe.

Claim 4 (original): The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the pump is automated and the apparatus further comprises a control section to activate the pump.

Claim 5 (original): The apparatus of claim 4, wherein:

the control section comprises sensors which detect at least one of a volume of the removed food and a biochemical/nutritional status of the patient; and

the control section deactivates the pump when one of (i) the detected volume exceeds preset parameters within a given time and (ii) the detected biochemical/nutritional status exceeds preset parameters.

Claim 6 (original): The apparatus of claim 5, wherein control section transmits at least one of the detected volume and the detected biochemical/nutritional status to a health care provider.

Claim 7 (original): The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the control section records detected information.

Claim 8 (original): The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the pump is manually operable.

Claim 9 (original): The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a bag adapted to be attached to the pump; and wherein the removed food is pumped into the bag.

Claim 10 (original): The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a cap for plugging the distal end portion of the tube when the pump is not attached to the tube.

Claim 11 (original): The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising an anchor to hold the tube in the upper digestive system of the patient.

Claim 12 (original): The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the anchor comprises a balloon anchor coupled to the tube and adapted to be anchored in the upper digestive system of the patient.

Claim 13 (original): The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the balloon anchor is adapted to be variably inflated so as to selectively fill a desired portion of the stomach of the patient.

Claim 14 (original): The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the tube includes an inflation lumen coupled to said balloon for communicating with the interior of the balloon.

Claim 15 (original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the tube includes a one way valve adapted to prevent the partially digested food from unintentionally escaping from the tube; and wherein the one way valve is adapted to be opened when the pump is attached to the tube.

Claim 16 (original): A method comprising:

inserting a tube into a patient such that a proximal end portion of the tube is disposed in the upper digestive system of the patient and a distal end portion of the tube extends externally from the patient;

connecting a pump to the distal end portion of the tube; and

controlling the pump to remove partially digested food from the upper digestive system of the patient through the tube.

Claim 17 (original): The method of claim 16, further comprising:

monitoring at least one of a volume of the pumped food and a biochemical/nutritional status of the patient;

ending the pumping when one of (i) the monitored volume exceeds preset parameters within a given time and (ii) the monitored biochemical/nutritional status exceeds preset parameters.

Claim 18 (original): The method of claim 17, further comprising transmitting at least one of the volume of the pumped food and the biochemical/nutritional status of the patient to a health care provider.

Claim 19 (original): The method of claim 16, further comprising at least one of:

educating the patient to modify caloric intake, lifestyle and food psychology through at least one of an instructor-taught program and an internet program;

regularly testing the patient's blood for electrolytes;

supplementing the patient's diet with vitamins as needed; and

administering medication to prevent gallstone formation as needed.

Claim 20 (original): An apparatus comprising:

a first tube adapted to be inserted into the upper digestive system of a patient;

a second tube adapted to be inserted into the lower digestive system of the patient;

wherein the first and second tubes are adapted to be connected in a subcutaneous tunnel; and

wherein partially digested food is transported through the first tube and the second tube from the upper digestive system to the lower digestive system of the patient.